



# Zeniada



# Zeniada

Johns Hopkins University

Spring 2017

Founded in 1929, *Zeniada* is an intercollegiate literary magazine based at Johns Hopkins University. Every spring and fall, we publish original work from undergraduates across the country.

The cover art for this issue is “A Green Star” (watercolor on paper) by *Benjamin Fried & Anastasia Tokmakova*.

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# Hung

by Hannah Thorpe

hung-

a hot-headed queen of denial  
smiling through rope-choked teeth  
swings above a carving block  
for the pleasure of primeval kings

mistress of misery and Delphian flesh  
preeminence

bought and sold  
her bone weariness is whittled so deep  
even the marrow is weak

all substance at attention, she stands tall  
saluting

a primetime Maginot line  
for a mid-morning Monday shooting

keeping with courtesy

and quiet acquiescence  
her neck is bowed and bent

hung-

like a sphinx with a twisted arm  
caught in a skeptic's trap

# Cheap Thrills

by Grace Moore

The world was erected by God or a bomb made of water.  
A fish, some kind of human sized thing.  
The Earth took shape and manners followed time  
with suits and housewives.

College and marriage  
for book clubs and Jesus.  
Our ancestors labored so that we may  
serve tea in an effort to be  
remembered, things  
forgotten.

What was once the Devil's music  
has been made into furniture  
for a Dentist's on Butternut Lane.

When the sky fell on the first day  
of the first year,  
I was in my pajamas,  
in quite a state because the sun was shining  
too brightly  
and my future kids can't read.

# Daddy

by Grace Moore

My father washes his hands with orchid petals and mist water. He dries, then wets them again to make emeralds out of oil in his eyes.

He sits and draws with pen what he can't write in the newspaper and turns a blind eye as four blessings grow more tired with age—two women makes a lonely life.

There's humor in subtlety and also in picking me up three and a half minutes late at summer camp.

He smells marijuana and hears sobbing louder than mother ever could. At night, he climbs the stairs slowly and with audible pain.

thump. thump. thump. relief.

He turns a blind eye of emerald and oil and washes his hands: orchid petals and mist water.

I can hear the bathroom water run from my bedroom. A necklace mother dropped running away from the problem hangs from my fingers like rosary beads.

He opens the door slowly, not wanting to disturb the geography of anything.

creak. cut. click. relief.

Dinner is so cold he talks mostly to himself, the voice ashen and gravel.

“I hate this smell—too sweet”

The breath is stolen from my lungs; every effort is to say sorry.

I can't love him in the eyes.

The phone doesn't ring to tell me he's died.

# Blue

by Clara S. Guyton

he was like the shell fixed by a parchment membrane, broken and unbroken.

(hollow hearts became less heavy in the twilight morning and I became the ghost of what is no longer. )

salt rises from the ocean wedged in his belly, the thought stretched like a tidal bulge between the open periwinkle cabinet door and his stinging ski-slope nose.

(i once carried a hundred pounds of salt in my stomach.)

there is something primal about the lines that look like cracked continents on the pasty shell of an unready chick before it hits his lips. once he said he loved the grit in messy things. the enviable moonlight filled the crevices that are miles deep between the pusillanimous secrets unhidden on his wrinkled, youthful brow.

(i once scraped at those stopping places.)

in spite of his love for arid, barren things his favorite place to stand is over the steaming hot water gushing from the achy faucet into the tin kitchen sink. he liked the way the rising steam settled his fidgeting mind and the soothing rhythm of the rushing water pulsed underneath him.

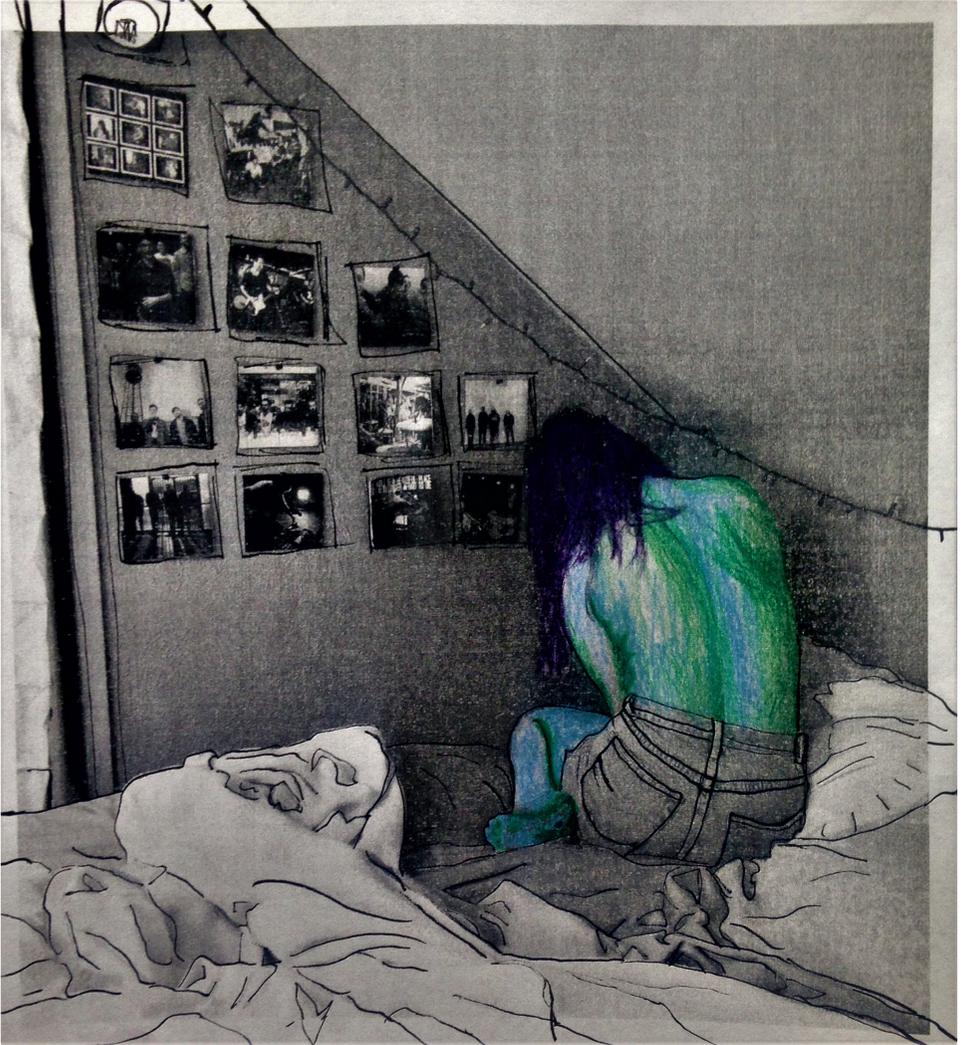
(i now know that only lonely, hot hearts are found in transmitted blue hues eating hard boiled eggs before the sun rises.)

in the blue kitchen light, deflated dreams dissolve into the consistency of a creamy waning gibbous moon, awkward and unreachable. Four hardboiled eggs in hand, he spins them on the counter like a distant deaf DJ. the crunch of the shell pressed against the white ceramic plate shatters the silent hum of this premature morning crisis.

# 41.19.105.35

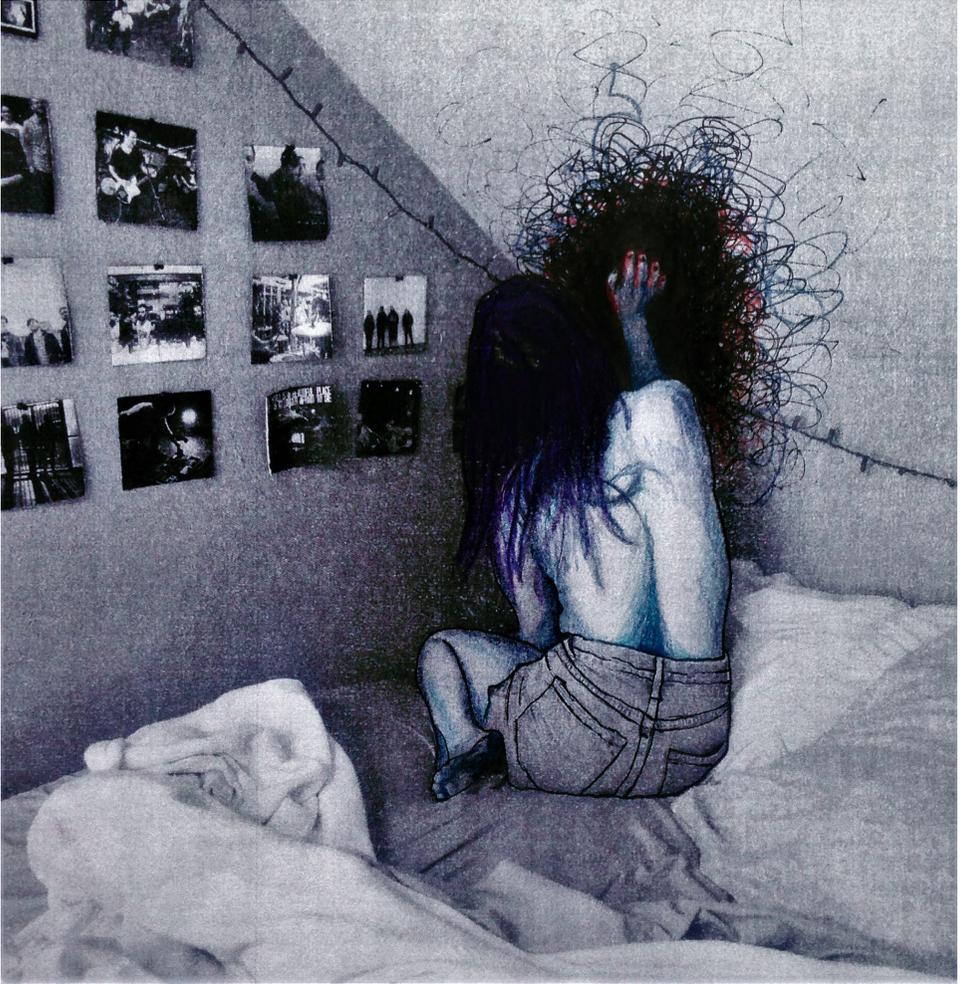
**by Brooke Thomas**

*The following works take inspiration from the doctored photographs of Julia Margaret Cameron and Saul Leiter. The progression of images attempts to indicate a violent disruption of isolation and an eventual precarious peace that is possible after such a disruption.*



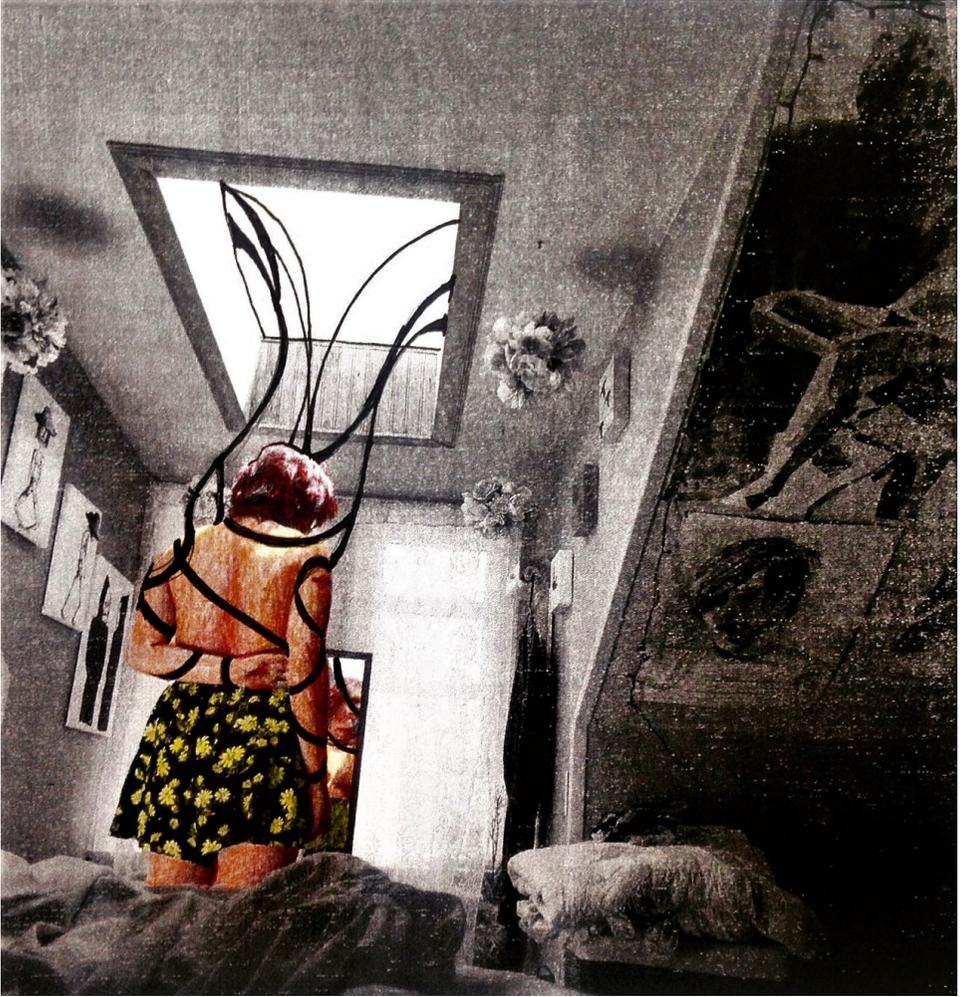
## Isolation

photography, colored pencil, pen



## At Bay

photography, colored pencil, pen



## Remove me from My Head

photography, colored pencil, pen



## Self-Love

photography, acrylic paint, colored pencil

# The Longshoreman

## by Hannah Thorpe

lower your voice, longshoreman  
heathen from a bad stew  
you forgot your thoughts in  
Vermont, forgot your tongue  
in the action park where you  
swept the leaves and muttered  
*it's over, it's over, four leaf clover*  
your face violet  
as you laughed your way to Eden  
so much of what you do is misshapen  
like dough that won't rise  
like yelling *fire!* in an asbestos  
insulated tomb  
you have no room  
to stop and then begin  
to say *please cancel my subscription*  
before the pamphlet pushers  
arrive at your door  
an earlock lady that says *do more*  
as she strokes the cross that sticks flat  
to the fleshy center of her chest  
watching you ignore the guidance you  
didn't ask for in the first place

# house.

by Allison Jiang

I used to think I would become a writer but now  
my words feel rusty at the joints;  
they scuttle awkwardly from my fingers, not as smooth  
as I remember them being,  
not nearly as beautiful.  
In the room downstairs where the Christmas tree used to be I see an image of myself,  
bowl-haired and  
not yet scared, playing with dolls I didn't yet know  
didn't look like me.  
Through the slats in the bannister I was able to see  
my mother videotaping me and I didn't even care.  
I lived there during a time when girls were best friends with their next-door neighbors  
and I no one had really told me  
how I was supposed to feel.  
I climb the carpeted stairs now and I am reminded  
of trips to the beach that felt like forever;  
I would run into the ocean because I knew I would be knocked down by the waves.  
The unfathomable force of the universe  
made me laugh so hard. I didn't know then that I would grow to fear the feeling  
of not feeling  
sand under my feet and I didn't know then  
that the next time I waded into the ocean  
I would be wearing denim cutoff shorts and thinking  
about a boy with blond hair; when I lived at 7 Hawthorne Drive I didn't yet know  
what would come to be  
of the world's roundness and my sharpness;  
the tiny hands of my wisdom;  
how things always come full circle  
but never in a way that makes sense.

# A Photograph from 1999

by **A.D. Lauren**

You have a fineness that comes to mind  
like inchworm  
so at its window for swallow  
to come and divulge —  
a death that is blessing in how it  
kills one to feed one  
more lovely.

In June,  
when the air conditioning broke,  
we took to pouring salt on these  
worms and slugs, just to watch their bodies  
melt, the seltzer of their death  
a glitter on our back patio.

I felt the breath go — but do they breathe?  
— gnawing at my inner cheek like hook  
through fish in Solomon's Island  
our skin so gently peeling in the sun  
as if painted, as if hollow  
geography of loose lawn mower parts  
spread out for our father to reassemble.

Do these rudimentary things have minds  
that they might think about their deaths  
with some sense of fear or hunger?  
or in their ignorance are they brave

like also that day at the Bay when  
you took my hand and stretched me toward  
the open mouth of water, pushed my head below  
the surface as if loving and violating  
are one and the same,

wanting — I could feel in your fingers tightened around  
my neck, that wanting — to tell me a secret  
on the car ride home. But also not worrying  
if my head would never come to lap the water,  
my bulbous eyes gradually relaxing  
in their sodden sockets,  
my body growing limp to the water  
malignant and curved like a worm  
away from wind and air

and staying there.





# Contributors

*Benjamin Fried* (Johns Hopkins University) is a silly man concerned with matters of exploitation and suffering. On any given day, you can find him with a brooding demeanor contemplating where he should focus his time as to enact maximum positive change.

*Clara S. Guyton* is a senior double majoring in English and Dance & Movement Studies at Emory University. In her spare time, she enjoys poetry, studying and being out in nature, playing the ukulele, and painting.

*Allison Jiang* (Johns Hopkins University) is a freshman from Holmdel, New Jersey. She hopes to one day own a big dog, play with words for a living, and set the Guinness World Record for most television watched by a human person.

*A.D. Lauren* is currently studying creative writing at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. Her work has appeared in the *Apeiron Review*, *Spires*, and elsewhere. Upon graduation, she will be pursuing an MFA in poetry at the Iowa Writer's Workshop.

*Grace Moore* is a second year at the University of Iowa majoring in English and Art History. Every poem is for her great grandmother, Grace Welch.

*Brooke Thomas* is a senior English major at Vassar College. She is a visual artist who works primarily in mixed media and is interested in and inspired by comics and graphic novels. You can find more of her work on Instagram (@a.minus.art).

*Hannah Thorpe* is studying Writing Seminars and Philosophy at Johns Hopkins University. She is from Topanga, CA.

*Anastasia Tokmakova* (SCI-Arc) is a Chow Chow studying architecture in Los Angeles, California. Among her favorite things is the chocolate bar, which despite her physiology is well tolerated. Similarly, she hopes to work on making the world a better place, one free of unnecessary woe.

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